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LETTER DATED 13 SEPTEMBER 1996 FROM THE PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF BURUNDI TO THE UNITED NATIONS ADDRESSED TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL

In my earlier letters to the President of the Security Council, particularly in my letter of 5 September 1996, I provided a preliminary outline of the general political programme drawn up by the new regime in Burundi with a view to resolving the crisis in the country and strengthening the democratic process.

I have the honour to transmit to you herewith the text of the statement by the Government of Burundi announcing the re-establishment of the National Assembly within the legal framework of the transitional institutional system and the resumption of activities by political parties.

On instructions from my Government, I should like to request that the text of this statement be circulated to all members of the Security Council as a document of the United Nations.

(Signed) Nsanze TERENCE
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

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Annex

Press release dated 12 September 1996 issued by the Minister of Communication, the Government spokesperson

1. The Council of Ministers held a special meeting on Thursday, 12 September 1996, under the chairmanship of the Head of State, His Excellency Major Pierre Buyoya.

2. On the agenda was an important political question: the draft text of a decree-law on the organization of the transitional institutional system.

The question had already been considered at previous meetings. The members of the Council focused on certain political issues which are being followed closely at the national, subregional and even international levels.

The two specific political issues were: political parties and the National Assembly. These two issues call for political decisions which will advance the higher interests of the Burundian nation.

3. In the Declaration of 25 July 1996 issued by the President of the Republic emphasis is placed on the need for the Burundian people to rally together, and the restoration of peace and security for all is considered to be the top priority.

In carrying out this task, the Government needs the contribution of all Burundians of all ethnic groups.

In carrying out this task, the Government of Burundi needs the support of the international community in general and of its neighbours in particular, who are following social and political developments in our country with great interest.

4. The transitional Government's programme sets out Burundi's political, socio-economic and diplomatic goals in detail. Our neighbouring countries are interested in seeing peace, stability and economic recovery in Burundi, as various subregional consultations show.

5. Consideration of the draft text of the decree-law on the organization of the transitional institutional system was intended to answer certain questions raised by Burundians and the international community.

6. The transitional Government's plan of action is a plan of peace, a plan for rallying together, reconciliation and economic recovery.

7. To implement this programme, and bearing in mind all the political realities of the moment, the various undertakings at the subregional level, and the Government's determination and commitment to work for peace, reconciliation and economic recovery, the Council of Ministers took two major political decisions on Thursday, 12 September 1996:

(a) First decision: The National Assembly is hereby re-established within the legal framework of the transitional institutional system which was considered by the members of the Council today.

(b) Second decision: Political parties and associations are hereby authorized to resume their activities, which shall respect the laws and regulations in force.

8. These two political decisions have been taken. In the days to come a text will give them the force of law. The President of the Republic and the Government will indicate to the re-established institutions ways of helping the people of Burundi find peace.

9. We should like to take this opportunity to inform the national and foreign press that the President of the Republic, His Excellency Major Pierre Buyoya, will hold a press conference this Friday, 13 September 1996, at the Hotel Source du Nil. Members of the diplomatic community in Bujumbura wishing to attend are invited to do so.

The President of the Republic will take this opportunity to provide explanations of a political, diplomatic and socio-economic nature with regard to these decisions by the Government.